



Lodge Grass OPI Team - Planning for Improvement February, 2011

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School change is like growing a garden. The first step in quality crops is preparing the soil. The ground work takes time, but is essential in cultivating productive results.

Community Liaison News – Forest Horn:

With tournaments just around the corner, basketball season is in full swing for both the Lodge Grass Indians and the Lady Indians. Good job to both teams and the coaches. On January 15th we hosted a community feed at the LGHS cafeteria. The onsite OPI team was there and made some great connections with community members. The event was a success and the food was great.

Donnie Wetzal, Statewide Youth and Community Outreach Coordinator, and Michael Munson, Indian Education Specialist, stopped by the high school to visit with students on January 12th. We met with different groups of students to discuss incentives, afterschool activities, and clubs they would like to see in their school. The feedback was great and I am excited to see their ideas in fruition.

The biggest project the students have their hearts set on is the student lounge and an incentive-based student store. We would like to empower the students and have them take ownership of these projects. Creating leadership opportunities and allowing the student voice to be heard is a top priority. We ended our morning with a pizza party at lunch. Fourteen high school and junior high students attended as they were the winners of the autograph bingo game we played with students in December.

Cub Scouts has been going strong. Mr. Martin does a great job with the kids and he has a good support team of parents. The kids really love to be in there working on the different activities set up for them. The Cub Scouts meet just about every Thursday evening at 7:00 p.m. Chad Martin is the contact person. The Boys and Girls Club is doing great as well. Their greatest need is volunteers. The kids would love to have someone there to read to them, play games with, or even just to color with. Annie Plenty Hawk does an amazing job with the Boys

and Girls Club and the kids really love and respect her.

I am working on becoming a resource and support for the Lodge Grass Schools. I would be more than happy to collaborate with parents, staff, board members, community members, and students on any ideas they may have. My door is always open and my phone is always on so feel free to approach me if you have anything you would like to chat about. Thank you and stay warm. Spring is almost here.

School Board Involvement --- Stevie

Schmitz: The Board of Trustees for Lodge Grass Public Schools met in both regular and special session. The most significant work accomplished by the board this month was the evaluation of the superintendent and the subsequent offering of a three-year contract to Victoria Falls Down. This process is an important step in establishing connections between the board and the superintendent. Creating avenues of collaborative leadership is an important process for the district. A training retreat for the board is planned for early February which is also an important step in developing the important role that the board has within the district. Roles and responsibilities, policy review, open meeting laws, hiring laws, and other topics will be explored.

A very productive meeting with the Crow Legislature and the Department of Education was attended by the SIG teams from Pryor and Lodge Grass. Important information was shared from all groups and plans were made to meet on a regular basis.

Transformation News--- Corri Smith:

The last scheduled meeting, January 17th, was cancelled due to weather conditions. This District Leadership Team (DLT), involving students, parents, teachers, support staff, and board members is working in committees to

develop plans to move the District Action Plan forward. The DLT is working on summaries of each section of the District Action Plan: 1) developing and increasing teacher and school leader effectiveness, 2) comprehensive instructional reform strategies, 3) increasing learning time and creating community-oriented schools, and 4) providing operational flexibility and support. These summaries will be available to the school staff, board, and community as soon as they are available.

The School Improvement Grant training on January 13th and 14th was well attended and informational. The teachers and school administrators that attended presented a panel discussion during a morning professional development to communicate what they learned and to discuss the upcoming support for the OPI in Helena.

Student Attendance 1st Semester

HS: 77%

Next Steps: This team (DLT) endeavors to ensure cyclical communication between the team and their constituents is in place—communication is the key to moving ahead.

Early Release Professional Development: On January 19th, the National Native Children's Trauma Center presented to the entire Lodge Grass Public Schools staff. In February, they will return and provide continuing support in this area.

Upcoming Dates

February 15 –

DLT Meeting - 4:00-6:00 p.m. Boardroom

March 1 –

DLT meeting 4:00-6:00 p.m. Boardroom

March 15 –

DLT meeting Boardroom

March 16 –

Early Out Professional Development
(all LG staff)

Instructional News – Angie Collins:

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Professional development has been provided in the areas of Understanding by Design (UbD) and Indian Education for All during the month of January. Understanding by Design is the backward unit design process Lodge Grass Schools are using for unit design. We will continue UbD training throughout February with a strong emphasis on assessment. More recently, John Small and I conducted a professional development session on Indian Education for All. We used the Indian Education page on the Office of Public Instruction website to guide teachers through lesson plans and professional development opportunities related to Indian Education for All.

Instructional Coaching

The outside consultant from the National Training Network, Roy Shelton, made two trips to Lodge Grass during the month of January. He continues to assist middle and high school math teachers with their program implementation efforts. Roy will continue providing services to Lodge Grass in February through online training modules. Ann Ganzert with Side by Side Consulting also spent time in Lodge Grass. She observed middle and high school Corrective Reading classes, as well as Communication Arts classes. Corrective Reading teachers are now required to keep a data notebook to record their progress in terms of pacing and student assessment. I will be monitoring the notebooks weekly. I will also continue to be present in classrooms offering instructional feedback to teachers throughout February.

Next Steps

In March, the state Criterion-Reference Test (CRT) will be administered to students in grades 3-8 and grade 10. To ensure improvement, a strong emphasis will be placed on test preparation. During the month of February, all teachers will be responsible for reviewing test-taking strategies and CRT-released items with students.

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From the Helena Office -- Nancy Coleman, SIG Unit Director:

District Leadership Team (DLT) – The DLT is the SIG district-formed team. This team is made up of representatives of all stakeholders in the district. Their goal is to work on school improvement initiatives and determine through local action where to put resources to work. The action plan details that are collaboratively developed at the meeting which outline the use of SIG funding should be fully supported by the administration and the board of the district.

College Goal Montana –Wednesday, February 9, and Sunday, February 13, get FREE, one-on-one help completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at any of 18 College Goal Montana locations. For more information, contact Student Assistance Foundation at 1-877-COLG4ME or visit www.CollegeGoalMT.org.

Grant Requirements for February & March:

For the board's information we are providing a listing of things that need to be accomplished at various levels. Much of the work is a continuation from the previous month.

For the On-site OPI Employees:

- Support the use of the CRT released items in classes for the state test in March;
- Continue to provide planning for the implementation of the District Action Plan (DAP);
- Continue work with SIG District Leadership Team (DLT) to establish District Action Plans details;
- Continue to assist with organizing the collaborative Professional Learning Communities (PLCs);
- Continue to support actions steps within the Montana Behavioral Initiative (MBI);
- Continue to schedule external professional development providers; and
- Continue to provide job-embedded professional development through training and coaching for all staff.

For the Principal:

- Continue to attend School Improvement Team meeting(s); coordinate professional development of the PLCs;
- Begin the planning the Assessment protocols for CRT testing coming up in March;
- Continue to lead, along with the MBI facilitator, action steps within the MBI;
- Begin getting a plan in place to accommodate the 3rd party evaluator using the SOPPAS (Schools of Promise Performance Assessment System) and provide support and feedback to teachers on effective instruction;
- Begin the work with SIG DLT to establish District Action Plan details;
- Continue to monitor a system to determine 'at risk' students based on – attendance, past class grades, discipline, support systems for success (student information system); and
- Put a plan in place that will accurately gather the required reporting data for grant compliance.

For the District/Superintendent:

- Begin the evaluation process for principals through the SOPPAS process;
- Continue to support the implementation of the DAP through resources, etc.; and
- Continue to participate in the finance calls that are provided by the OPI once a month.

For Teachers:

- Actively participate in collaborative PLCs;
- Continue to plan and implement lesson plans that include standards alignment with ongoing assessments;
- Continue to implement the programs for communication arts and mathematics with fidelity;
- Continue to actively participate in school improvement teams which you are involved with;
- Begin to use the released items for the state required test (MontCas); and

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- Start the evaluation process with 3rd party evaluators.

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Statewide Youth and Community

Outreach – *Don Wetzel, Jr.*: This month has been very progressive in our youth and community outreach. We have begun to work with the tribal governments and tribal programs to work together on some of the issues in the schools. Funding has been a big topic and we are working with many programs trying to share resources to develop incentive programs for the youth. We have also started to speak directly to the students by engaging them to identify the solutions on attendance and grade improvement. We have some of the most talented students walking our halls and they have many of the answers we seek. Some youth want to push an incentive-driven student lounge with snacks and games that they could buy from fundraising. They want to develop after-school programs and clubs such as rodeo, drama, and break-dancing to name a few. They are interested in making things more interesting, such as pep assemblies and open gym. There truly is nothing better than to see a student's eyes light up when they feel empowered.

Our Community Liaisons are working with them to put words into actions. We are encouraging the schools to look at a process for recognizing students, teachers and staff in appreciation for the work they are doing. Mutual respect is so important in making this all work and that is why we want to bring in Elders to speak at the schools and share their wisdom and stories. Many ideas are coming out of this with the main focus being on identity. Our Community Liaisons will be implementing the Home Visiting Project for the remainder of the year as well. This project will benefit the relationships between the school and the parents. If you are interested in what this is, visit with your Community Liaison and they can show the video of how this has worked around

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the country. We have started community feeds too to get better acquainted with teachers, parents, and staff. We are helping the youth get ready for college by sitting down and helping them with paperwork or even giving them a ride to take their ACT or SAT.

We appreciate the opportunities that are given to us every day with the community, staff and students and hope to continue to grow and progress in a good way to better the futures of our children and communities.

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SIG Field Consultant News -- Courtney Peterson:

- Instructional Leader communications including weekly calls and monthly meetings
- Research upcoming indicator topics such as science implementation, advisory, and summer institutes
- Coordinate program-specific professional development and external consultants
- Assist with district action planning guidance and templates
- Facilitate teaming activity at January 14 SIG meeting
- Support and assist with implementation of general SIG efforts
- Site Visit January 5 - Canceled due to illness
- Site Visit January 27

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